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farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2526

Oct. 4, 1991

MADIGAN TOURS SOVIET UNION -- Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan** & a delegation of federal officials and private representatives from U.S. agriculture left Oct. 1 for a ten-day mission to the Soviet Union. The mission, directed by President **George Bush**, is designed to help the Soviet Union and its republics improve their ag production & distribution as the country moves toward a free-market system. "We will continue to assess the area's food needs & determine how the United States and other nations can help alleviate possible hardships," Madigan says. **Contact: Cameron D. Bruemmer** (202) 447-6307.

TOMORROW'S HIGH-TECH CROPS might contain new genes switched on by daylight to boost flavor, nutrient content or other qualities. The futuristic genes would be driven by the plant's own light sensitive receptors -- molecules called phytochrome, says USDA scientist **Peter H. Quail**. "Phytochrome is much like the photoelectric sensors that turn on street lights at dusk and turn them off at dawn," Quail says. **Contact: Peter H. Quail** (510) 559-5900.

SUGAR MARKETING ALLOTMENTS NOT NECESSARY -- Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan** has announced that sugar marketing allotments will not be established for domestic sugar for fiscal year 1992. The determination is based on estimated import requirements for fiscal year 1992 of above 1.25 million short tons. **Contact: Bruce Merkle** (202) 447-8206.

WORLD FOOD PRIZE -- **Nevin S. Scrimshaw**, a public health doctor and international nutritionist, will be awarded the World Food Prize in Des Moines, Iowa. Scrimshaw will receive \$200,000 and a sculpture created by world-renowned designer **Saul Bass** for Scrimshaw's contributions in the fight against hunger and malnutrition in developing countries. According to the World Health Organization, one out of every five humans -- about 1 billion people -- suffers from disease, poor health or malnutrition. **Contact: Herman Kilpper** (515) 245-2411.

A TENNIS BALL CANISTER can become a deadly trap to insects that infest grain, peanuts & grain products, thanks to a brainstorm by USDA scientist **Michael A. Mullen**. "I had been working on a trap that relied on an incline to catch insects," Mullen says. "One night when I was playing tennis, I looked at the shape of a tennis ball canister. It got me thinking about how the concave design of the canister's bottom could be used as a trap." **Contact: Michael A. Mullen** (912) 233-7981.



AQUACULTURE -- The growth of the catfish industry is slowing and prices are declining, USDA economists say. The average farm price for catfish in August was 60 cents per pound, 21 percent lower than in August 1990 & the lowest farm price since September 1987. This places considerable economic pressure on farmers and, if sustained at this low level, a retrenchment in the industry may occur as growers are forced out of business. **Contact: Dave Harvey** (202) 219-0888.

BEEF COOK-OFF FACTS -- **Sandy Collins**, of Wheat Ridge, Colo., has won the 1991 National Beef Cook-Off in Colorado Springs, Colo., with her recipe for Spanish Steak Roll with Sauteed Vegetables. During the Sept. 22 - 24 cook-off: about 110 pounds of beef were prepared; the most popular type of dish was steak; the two most popular cuts were tenderloin steaks and boneless chuck shoulder pot roast; 25 recipes (about 40 percent) had under 300 calories per serving; and ten of the 64 contestants were male. **Contact: American National CattleWomen, Inc.** (303) 694-0313.

NEW BLACKEYE PEA -- A new southern blackeye pea packs a double payoff for both home gardeners & commercial growers: it resists attack from two of the crop's most damaging pests in the southeastern states & can produce up to 35 percent higher yields. "Bettergrow Blackeye" is the result of 12 years of breeding by scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Charleston, S.C. **Contact: Philip D. Dukes** (803) 556-0840.

HOP STOCKS UP -- The hop inventory is up. On Sept. 1, hop growers, dealers & brewers were holding 54.2 million pounds of hops. This amount is 4 percent more than they held a year ago. In 1990, hop growers produced 56.9 million pounds -- down 4 percent from 1989's production. Hop is a perennial, tall-growing vine used in beer manufacture & in medicines. **Contact: Jim Brewster** (202) 447-2127.

THERE ARE MORE & MORE SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES and families with both parents working these days & the number of young children being left at home alone is on the increase. These youngsters face a variety of potential problems, but there are some things that parents can do to make the situation easier & safer. Establishing house rules is one key & the youngsters should help make these rules. **Contact: Billie Frazier** (301) 405-1019.

THIS IS AN EXCELLENT TIME to transplant trees & shrubs. One secret to successful transplanting is to dig the hole large enough to let the roots spread out. **Contact: Conrad Link** (301) 404-4353.

<p><i>Editor: Marci Hilt Phone: (202) 447-6445</i></p>
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FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1791 -- Is the U.S. food supply safe from disease causing residues or microorganisms? That's the question **Gary Crawford** asks of consumer advocates, environmentalists & pesticide makers on this edition of **Agriculture USA**. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1273 -- Food safety controversy; high-tech supermarkets; red maples; trigger happy; is California free of the Medfly? (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1781 -- USDA News Highlights; food aid to the Soviets; 1992 acreage reduction program; USDA opposes marketing loans for grain; fruit outlook. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1440 -- Unraveling anaplasmosis; wild hosts; bighorn pathogen; spleen surgery; viral cousins. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Wed., Oct. 16, milk production, crop/weather update, ag resources; Mon., Oct. 21, ag outlook, ag trade update, catfish production, world livestock situation; Wed., Oct. 23, rice outlook, poultry production; Thurs., Oct. 24, oil crops outlook; Fri., Oct. 25, livestock/poultry update. (These are the **USDA reports we know about in advance**. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.)

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on a traveling art exhibit designed to increase public awareness of rare animal breed conservation; **Scott Huffman** of Mississippi State University reports on a new use for poultry products.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA economist **Barbara Claffey** with a new ag outlook; USDA meteorologist **Norton Strommen** with a crop & weather update; USDA economist **Verner Grise** with a US tobacco outlook; USDA economist **Merritt Padgett** on ag resources; USDA economist **Diane Bertelsen** on the US fruit situation.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **Lynn Wyvill** reports on changes in US turkey consumption; **Pat O'Leary** reports on living history farms; **DeBoria Janifer** reports on female smokers & osteoporosis.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Westar 4, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Saturdays from 10 - 10:45 a.m., EDT, and Mondays from 8 - 8:45 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

AG APPRECIATION DAY...was held in late September, sponsored by **Matt Westergaard's** station (KMIT-FM, Michell, S.D.). Free beverages & food were served to about 1,000 people. It's the seventh year for the event. Matt says the corn and bean harvests were slim due to dryness -- 35 bushels-per-acre corn & 20 bushels-per-acre beans were common. Producers need rain so they can plant winter wheat.

FIRST FROST...that hit west central Iowa last month hurt the soybeans, says **Neil Trobak** (KCIM/KKRL, Carroll, Iowa). Some will not mature, especially those in the northern sections of the state which were further behind in development. Corn was not affected; many areas had 100 bushel yields.

DECEASED...**Louella Engel**, aged 96. For ten years, 1944 to 1954, she was the only woman farm director at a commercial station. Majority of her career was at WMOH, Hamilton, Ohio. **Layne Beaty** (USDA radio & TV, retired) forwarded the information.

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Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
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GUEST AUCTIONEER...for the 4-H Livestock Show at the county fair was a role **Skip Johnson** (WXXQ/WFRL, Freeport, Ill.) enjoyed. The auction helped to raise funds for 4-H projects. Corn & bean yields in northern Illinois are less than last year, but not as bad as expected. Rain arrived when needed. Skip says the station has made programming changes that increase focus on ag production in the area. One of the new daily programs is "Farming Today Spotlight" featuring an interview with a local farmer.

HARVEST IS COMPLETE...in south-central Canada, says **Les Kletke** (Radio Southern Manitoba, Altona). Most producers of cereal grains & beets had disappointing results. Hot, dry weather in August stressed the crops. Les is also covering effects on the rural economy of low grain prices, the strike by federal workers that has stalled grain shipments & the support rural businesses are demonstrating for farmers.

VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division